



ON COMPROMISES OF TRUTH IN RELIGIOUS
TEACHING.

A LECTURE

DELIVERED IN

St. George's Catholic Cathedral,
SOUTHWARK,

On the Evening of Sunday, June 22nd.

BY

HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL WISEMAN.

LONDON:

THOMAS RICHARDSON AND SON,

172, FLEET STREET ; 9, CAPEL STREET, DUBLIN ; AND DERBY.

1851.

PREFACE.

The following Discourse is published at the request of several persons who were present at its delivery ; and as it is taken from an accurate short-hand writer's notes, with only a few verbal corrections, which I have confided to a friend, it appears just as it was spoken. It will not be thought unreasonable, that some indignation should be felt, and expressed, at such sentiments as are commented on at the close of the lecture. They were uttered in a Protestant pulpit, and seem to call for an answer from a Catholic pulpit. In fact, they suggested the entire Discourse.

London, Vigil of SS. Peter & Paul, 1851.

LECTURE.

"HE THAT IS NOT WITH ME IS AGAINST ME, AND HE THAT GATHERETH NOT WITH ME, SCATTERETH."

The meaning of these words, my dear brethren, is very simple; they signify that there is no compromise with error, that there is no sacrifice ever to be made of truth. Our Blessed Redeemer's public conduct as a teacher shows a peculiar mixture of two distinct characters: on the one hand, a mildness, a gentleness, a forbearance beyond limits, and on the other, a sternness, and an uncompromising and unflinching determination. He bore, Himself, any amount of personal abuse and obloquy, and misrepresentation. He allowed Himself to be ill-treated in every possible way. He opposed to this, nothing but that meekness and mildness which overcame all the power of his enemies.

And with His apostles He was the same. Though He bore with their constant falling back into the same faults of misunderstanding His teaching and especially His practice, yet with all this, where there was a clear impugning of His truth, wherever there was the opposing to His doctrines, distinctly cherished practices and principles which ought to have been reformed by what He had said and done, He then spoke with a degree of severity, with a power of denunciation, with a threatening aspect and accent, with even what might be called a fierceness of rebuke which seemed at variance with the entire character of

the rest of His conduct. When the Pharisee, or the Sadducee, or the obdurate priest, resisted His teaching, He knew that no compromise with truth was to be permitted, and He would not allow for a moment that any thing should stand by its side. If we come to consider the state of religious opinion, or rather religious principle, at the time of our Saviour, we might have supposed that He would have yielded to what seemed to be sincerely held as the truth. The Pharisees, according to St. Paul, seemed to be persons of a higher standard of truth than the rest of the Jews; they admitted doctrines which were rejected by other sects, but which were admitted by Christ; they believed the spirituality of the soul and a future resurrection; they exacted, particularly, compliance with observances that had been given by God through Moses; and yet, though they seemed to be naturally nearer to that new system of doctrine which our Lord came to establish, though, at first sight, it might appear that Pharisaism, despoiled of its hypocrisy and pride, was, as a system, the natural road from Judaism to Christianity, yet we observe that our Lord does not pause to court its professors whose co-operation might have seemed useful; but, standing on His own truth, as incapable of entering into any union with any other system, as if necessarily putting aside whatever was not strictly in accordance with it, He boldly asserts this principle: "There is no medium:—there is no such thing as an approach; there is only truth on one side, and error on the other. Are you with me on this side completely?" "No," they reply, "we stand neuter; we are not against you; we cannot yet join you; we are approaching you; we are not leagued against you." Our Lord says—"Then you are not with me; you are against me. There is no standing place between the two."

My brethren, this is an awful principle, but a principle that is essentially necessary for truth. Truth

knows no middle lights, no slight shades; it knows only two things—light, which is itself; darkness, which is error. There is nought between them. You are in the one or in the other.

But still, many may say: We may be in the dark, but we are not inclined to join you altogether; we will not resist your work; we will stand passive; we will be observers, calm, dispassionate lookers-on. You are engaged in a great work; you are undoing the whole established society in religion and morals, in all that regards our received truths. You differ from us in very first principles, you differ from us in doctrine; then permit us to watch and see, and observe how your work proceeds. We will not oppose you, we will not stir, nor prevent that which you do from being undone.”—But our Lord will reply: “You mistake. You say, you will not gather with me, therefore you scatter. You are destroying my work if you are not with me; you are essentially an enemy; you cast to the winds, with the best of your power, that which I seek to gather up. And what is this? The souls of men. I have come to collect them together. As a shepherd bears in his bosom the lost sheep, so have I come to gather my sheep into the fold, to shelter them safe from the wolf. You are breaking down the pens which would collect them safe; you scatter them, and drive them again into the desert. I am as one come to gather together into His garners the harvest which He has been sowing, which He has been cultivating and reaping. You say, we will not assist you, but we will not impede you.—You mistake;—you are driving to the winds this precious harvest of mine, while you stand by and do not join with me.”

A tremendous principle of truth this, my brethren. You must either be gathering, or you must be scattering. You must either be with Christ, or against Him. Thus He spoke to the pharisees and to the priests. And that principle once

established as the principle of truth, remains as unshaken, as unaltered, as eternal in His Church, as does the truth that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, that He was the Word of God, that He was the Wisdom of God, and spoke nothing but truth. That principle existed in His time; it existed in laying the foundations of His Church; it exists to this day. There is no medium—with Christ or against Him, gathering with Him, or scattering.

My brethren, the Church of God as a teacher, is but the embodying in an enduring visible and sensible form, His principles of truth. He promised to be with that Church, to be in that Church; in other words, He promised to be the very soul of that Church; and therefore it is absurd, not to say worse, it is blasphemous, even sacrilegious, to suppose that Christ can be with His Church, and yet that that Church can teach or hold any principles at variance with His principles. It is as repugnant as to say that the soul can animate the body, and yet that the body may be able, or that, on principle, it is bound, to act on a different rule and under a different law of life from that which the soul holds in itself and communicates to it. If Christ our Lord is to be with His Church to the end of time, that Church (I do not say which it is, but) wherever it is, must hold the same principles as Christ did, otherwise Christ is not in it. This principle in the Church must be now as it has been in every age:—"With me or against me, gathering with me or scattering;—because I, the Church on earth, now represent that teaching which Christ our Lord exercised in His own person. I am His delegate or deputy; nay, more than that, I am Himself incorporated into a society, and therefore I must teach what He taught, and this principle must remain unchanged.

Now if we try this rule, we shall see how practical it is now, and has been at all times. Suppose, for instance, that in the time of the apostles, there should

come a man of undoubted virtue—his moral conduct unimpeachable, and his practical working successful. He moves by the piety of his life as well as by the wisdom of his words. Every one says,—such a man as that, so sincere, so upright, so clearly fearing and loving God, cannot be in a state of warfare with God. He may teach some errors; he may not be correct in all he says, because he is a man; but surely all these admirable qualities, this beautiful perfection, showing the possession of signal graces, must be a sufficient excuse for this man if he goes astray. He has taken the bible in his hands; he gives a different colour to some texts from what we find other teachers do, but surely he will not be condemned; and, if he comes and proposes to me a doctrine different from what others have done, there are evidences that I may follow this man to the extent of varying in the interpretation of certain points which have been revealed by the Word of God, and are written in the Holy Scriptures, and in which he exercises not only his private judgment, but the judgment of a chastened mind, of a thoughtful, meditative, prayerful soul, and an affectionate heart,—one who loves our Lord. And surely this man is entitled to interpret Scripture, if it is given to be interpreted according to the thoughts, the feelings, and the judgments of men. If private judgment is the rule of faith now, it was then. The Church must have been the same then. Could you imagine, therefore, a person more entitled to use this freedom of judgment than such a man as I have described? Now what says St. Paul? “If an angel from heaven teach you another doctrine than that which I have taught you, let him be anathema.” Is that man equal to an angel of heaven? Has he the purity of a spiritual existence? Is he one who has ministered before God, seeing Him face to face for ages? Is he one who has intelligence far above

Paul—one who surpasses him a thousand times? Yet if an angel comes and teaches a doctrine different from what Paul, a man, a frail man, teaches, he is to be anathema, to be accursed, and to be put away as an angel of darkness!

Is not this the same stern, uncompromising principle? You must agree with Paul, or you must be anathema. No matter who teaches you, no matter what perfection he has in himself, you must not follow him, you must put him from you. Thus there is the same uncompromising assertion of true and exclusively authoritative teaching in the apostle's time as in any other.

I do not wish to fatigue you, my brethren, by what might easily be put before you, a series of examples taken from every age of the Church, to show that this principle has always existed, but I will put it rather in a more simple and attainable form. I will ask any one who has read the history of the Church, to tax his memory to the utmost; to go through every age of primitive teaching; to examine the acts of every Council; to recollect the special tendency of the writings of each Father; to study the spirit of the age; and then to tell me if he can remember a single instance of any father, who either by word or by practice admits the principle, that on any given doctrine which he himself holds as true because held by the Church, who admits of this being the doctrine of the Church into which he adheres—that any one is at liberty to teach contrarily, or even differently, and still that he is willing to hold with him in communion. I will go further, and ask him to remember an instance of one great doctrine, on which there was a debate during any given century;—I will not speak of such a doctrine as the Divinity of our Lord, or against Arianism; I will not speak even of what now-a-days would be considered a doctrine of lesser import, such as that involved in the Nestorian or Eutychian cen-

troversy respecting the nature and person of our Lord. I will take secondary points ; as, for instance, whether the Church can forgive enormous sins or not, as the Montanists and the Novatians denied ; or such a doctrine, (at least, after it had been definitively settled by the Church,) as whether persons baptized by heretics ought to be re-baptized when they become Christians or Catholics. Nay, even such mysterious and difficult doctrines as the nature of election, the limits of grace and free-will, or the functions and extent of the natural powers of man. Take those times, and I say that, if you can find a single father who asserts that what he teaches on those or any other points, is the doctrine of what he calls the Church, and who allows at the same time that we must not be hard with those who differ from us, and must allow a certain liberty in limiting the principle on such points as the Church teaches ;—if you can find me one example of a doctor of the ancient Church who maintains the principle that there is a medium state in the Church, between the holding and opposing any doctrine ; I will freely own that the principle which our Saviour laid down in the passage which I have been considering, was forgotten during that particular time. But, my brethren, every one knows that the attempt to find in the ancient Church a single example of that which, in modern religion, is called liberality,—of that which is called “the broad basis on which sects can agree,” is utterly hopeless. It was a thing unheard of and unknown, not only down to the time of the Reformation, but for a long time after the Reformation ; for never was any system so exclusive as the Reformation in its first origin ; never was any christian community so intolerant as was one sect of Protestants towards another, until political circumstances rendered religious toleration expedient, and, indeed, absolutely necessary for the maintenance of their position

against what they regarded as their common enemy.

There can be no difficulty, therefore, in establishing the principle contained in the words of our Saviour respecting being with Him or against Him. And accordingly, in this view of religion, and in that of the whole ancient Church, there is nothing admissible except the Church or heresy. There is no medium in the Church. Under no circumstances has she ever admitted what may be called communion in matters of religion with those who were without her pale.

Now the thought arises in the minds of many that there was unkindness and uncharitableness in all this. My brethren, I would have you but study the history of the ancient Church to understand how false this is. The idea is as false in its application to her, as it is with regard to the modern Church. If you will look into the writings of St. Augustine, and see the manner in which he corresponds with the Donatists for example, the heretics against whom he waged the fiercest war, you will find how meek and kind he was in his personal relations with them, and how he complains that while the Catholics saluted those who differed from them in religion, they refused to salute in return. The Catholic Church was gentle; was condescending; and, as far as personal freedom went, certainly always showed charity; and, on the other hand, you find similar complaints by other fathers respecting those separated from the church. No doubt when they wrote against them, when they were engaged in controversy, they used severe language; they spoke to them as men who were anxious for their souls, and who believed them to be in fatal error; but, when they came to the courtesies and kindnesses of life, the ancient fathers knew well that charity was a universal virtue; that she embraced all within her arms; and that our Blesséd Redeemer, in His dealings with the Samaritan, gives a lesson how men should

treat with those whom they in their hearts believe to be involved in a serious and fatal error. But of the dogmatic principle, the theological principle, I repeat, that it has always been unvarying; that the Church has never admitted the principle of there being any but two sides, truth and error.

You will perhaps ask, my brethren, what has led me to make these remarks at the present time. Those who are in the habit of frequenting this Church, know that it has been my custom to allude to what is passing around us; to take the subject of my evening lectures from the questions or the principles that, at the moment, are agitating the religious mind of the nation; and therefore I have no doubt that some of you will have already conjectured, that, in what I have been saying, it is my intention, to make the application to something that has been occurring of late. And I will at once own that it is so.

But first, before proceeding to the application of the principle to others, allow me to say that, as regards us, as regards the Catholic Church of which it is my happiness to be a member, there has been, down to the present day, no change whatever from that principle which I have shown you existed in the first ages. In others words, we hold as a Church, precisely the same doctrine as our Blessed Redeemer taught.

It may appear to some presumptuous to think that we dare to speak with that calm authority and decision with which infallible Truth spake of old through the mouth of the eternal Wisdom Incarnate. But, my brethren, remember this:—either the Church is conscious in herself of what she is, or she is not that at all, and cannot be it. Stammering lips, uncertain assertions, surmises, suggestions, hopefulness;—all these are utterly unknown to true and certain consciousness.

Thus, my brethren, you never, for example, doubt

for a moment, that any one of you who is listening to me now is the same individual who remembers having been a child, who remembers having been educated under such circumstances, having been at a particular school, and having been brought up to such a profession; who, at one time said such and such a thing; who, at another time, committed something that was evil, and who at another time did a good work on the memory of which he still dwells with pleasure. Do you, for a moment, lose the thought of your identity, and say: "it is not I who did those things; it must have been some one else?" No; there is no principle so certain as this consciousness of identity—this infallible knowledge and conviction which nothing can drive out of any of us, that we are the same individual whom we can trace back to the first dawn of reason. Do what I will, I cannot change my identity for that of any other person.

Now, if any one should tell you that you have doubts respecting a certain principle which you have always held, you say it is impossible. If any one endeavours to persuade a protestant that for the ten last years he has been a Catholic, no arguments, no amount of evidence, could combat in his mind the simple consciousness that he is a better witness of his own acts and thoughts than any external testimony. In the same way the Church, if it is the Church, if it is a body teaching infallibly, has a consciousness of it, and has been as conscious of it without any interruption from the very beginning as any individual can be, of his personal experience. And as it is no presumption in you, in spite of what thousands may say to the contrary, to maintain and believe that you are the individual you know yourself to be; so it is no presumption in the Church, knowing herself with an inward consciousness—a consciousness of interior evidence—a certainty in her very soul from the beginning, that she

is the same Church that was established by our Lord, and that she has always kept the same principle ;— it is no presumption in her to say :—“ I teach, and I must teach precisely what our Lord taught ; and whatever amount of certainty there was in His teaching, that He communicates to me ; and I am conscious of teaching with the same certainty, and of maintaining the same principle as He did.”

The Church, therefore, is as sure of her infallibility and her invariability in doctrine, as any man can be respecting the law or the principle of his own identity. She is not presumptuous, then, in saying :—“ I teach what the Council of Trent taught, and the Council of Trent teaches what St. Bernard taught, and he taught what St. Augustine taught, and St. Augustine taught what St. Peter taught, and St. Peter taught what our Lord Himself taught.” The Church feels herself to be essentially the same Church throughout, and, therefore, she now speaks unflinchingly the very same language as our Lord did.

She says then,—and to a mind that can understand the grand sublimity of this principle, it is appalling if he is not with her,—she says, in the same words with our Lord :—“ He who is not with Me, in whom the Spirit abideth, teaching all truth,—he who is not with Me, with whom is Christ Jesus, and who will be with Me till the end of time,—he who is not with Me, who am founded on the Rock which cannot be shaken, and against which the gates of hell cannot prevail,—he who is not with Me, who am built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, with the corner-stone, that is Christ,—he who is not with Me, to whom have been given the promise of empire over the whole world,—he who is not with Me, who am the Spouse of Christ Jesus ;—that man is against Me. He who gathereth not with Me, to whom alone has been given the commission to gather together all the nations of the earth within one fold,

—he who gathereth not with Me, who alone have been made the mother of the children of God, to clasp them in my saving embrace, to bring together that which Christ, through His apostles, has sown through the whole world, and to keep them together in unity,—he who does not gather with Me, to whom alone was given that promise in the prayer, by Him who was ever heard for reverence due to Himself, that they should be “one with Him, as He and His Father were one,”—he who gathereth not with Me scattereth;—scattereth to the four winds of the earth; he is as the blighting storm of the desert, blowing over valuable lands, destroying and carrying barrenness where fertility before dwelt.

This is the teaching, this the speaking of the Catholic Church. She says so boldly; she knows no compromise with truth. Tell her that at this moment there are fifty thousand Lutherans ready to join her in communion, if she will allow them not to believe transubstantiation, but consubstantiation, in the Blessed Eucharist, that they will give up everything else, that they will forego every worldly advantage; nay, that the king of a Lutheran state will come, if but this concession be made. Only think; it turns on a single syllable of a compound word, the substitution of *con* for *trans*. And yet the Church of God will reject them at once. No, no, no. “With me, or against me; gather entirely with me, or scatter.” I cannot compromise the smallest tittle, though it would produce even an increase of my power and my ranks, and though I may thereby gather apparently into my fold what would promote unity. Or again, tell the Church that this mighty empire, this magnificent kingdom, this powerful race, whose ships are over the whole ocean, whose banners are unfurled on the extremest seas,—tell the Church that this whole kingdom will join the Holy See and submit at once, provided only they are allowed

to maintain one or two doctrines;—to deny purgatory, or to use their own liturgy unaltered, or to maintain the independence of the Church as to particular matters, acknowledging the virtual superintendence of the Holy See. What a temptation!—what an immense temptation would it not be, to gather in the millions of souls that speak the British tongue or acknowledge the British Dominion! Oh, what a bribe! Such as was never before held out to the Church! And yet the Church, with weeping eyes, with sad, but unflinching voice, would say: “O! I cannot accept you;—I cannot admit you into union with me, so long as there is a single point that I hold of faith, in which you will not unite with me thoroughly, heartily, and completely, in soul and in word.”

Oh, what a noble principle, what a sublime conception of the beauty, of the grandeur, of the divinity of truth is this; that rather would it leave out of its pale, (knowing that in that state it could not be partakers of its blessings,) the whole world, and the power of the greatest of nations, than sacrifice one particle of what God has entrusted to its charge!

Yes, my brethren, all these things are great, all these things are valuable, but, in the eye of the Catholic and his Church, truth is so superior, so unlimitedly elevated above every earthly consideration, that all must be sacrificed rather than yield one particle of that truth. I have said a particle of truth. I must recall that word. Truth has no parts, no portions, no subdivisions. Truth is the wisdom of God, truth is the light of God, truth is the thought of God—it is God Himself. And we cannot cut Him into portions; we cannot say we believe thus much of God, and that is as much as we believe. Of every doctrine which the Catholic Church holds, she believes in her soul in her heart, that it is registered and inscribed on the mirror of Eternal Wisdom into

which she looks—the wisdom of God Himself, and she cannot vary from it. Woe to her if she should ! Christ would depart from her ! She must say as He said :—“ He that is not with me is against me ; he that gathereth not with me, scattereth.”

While the Church maintains now, as distinctly as ever, this principle of unvarying and unflinching attachment to what she knows to be the truth, let us see what has been going on around her.

And first, my brethren, I cannot but feel some little embarrassment in alluding to what appear, at first sight, such trifling topics, when compared with the great principle on which they may be made to bear. It seems almost subjecting to a test of paltry character a great principle of truth. But still we know that in this way great principles may be tried.

There has been, as you all know, a union here of all the marvels that earth can produce. The Great Exhibition has collected in one place the productions of the skill, the genius, and the experience of every nation. And this thought seems to have struck some minds :—If it is then possible to bring together the material representatives of the mental powers of various people ;—if it is found that peace and good will result from this ;—why may we not bring together the representatives of the spiritual mind ? Why may not this occasion be turned to the consolidation of religious truth, by showing it capable of variations, and, at the same time, of unity ? Such is the thought which has brought here together a number of ministers of the different countries of Europe, whose appearance has excited a controversy that ought not to be overlooked by those who are watchful of the signs of the times, and who wish to ascertain the real state of religion in this country.

I do not wish to say anything that would be painful, or that would appear severe, because I can easily understand and appreciate that longing after

unity, that sort of feeling of loneliness which has long been one of the pains, one of the trials of Protestantism in England. The opportunity has been favourable. There have been collected together ministers from various countries. They have been received with hospitality. Large sums have been subscribed to make their sojourn religiously agreeable, and they have been invited even to take their stand among the religious teachers of the land. They have been allowed to preach publicly, in churches even belonging to the Establishment, and when this particular act of communion has been prohibited, it has been on the lowest of imaginable grounds—the simple one of illegality;—that is, it has not been for a moment objected that the principle was wrong, it has not been said that the Church can admit no shades of difference in teaching, that the Church will not expose itself to the possibility of its pulpits being made the means of inculcating doctrines that are not taught there. No, the simple ground of prohibition has been that it was illegal. All that showed friendliness of community has been liberally given; and, a few evenings ago, a bishop and an archbishop of the Established Church of England, showed their sympathy for the pastors and ministers of foreign churches. And observe, that this was not an act of kindness shown to literary men, or to scientific men, as such, but expressly, by name, and intention, and avowed design, to the ministers of those foreign churches as such.

Now, what is the basis of union between them? My brethren, there were at that moment in this kingdom, men belonging to the acknowledged Church of France—to the episcopal Church of France, to the only episcopal Church of France—that which is considered therefore as a branch of the true Church. There was here one of the most eloquent, one of the most splendid of sacred orators at this moment in the Church. He was here, as well as the French pastors

of various small communities of Protestants in different parts of the same country. Was he invited? Certainly not. No Catholic was asked. Then I take it for granted that Protestantism was the basis of intercommunion—that all who were not Catholics had the liberty of coming in.

But what as to Scripture? Will all admit Scripture as the groundwork of religion, and that alone—Chillingworth's standard of the Church of England? No, there was a minister of the Greek Church admitted. Now the Greek Church prays to the Blessed Virgin; she prays to the saints; she admits the real presence; she holds every doctrine of the Catholic Church except that on which she separated originally, and that of the supremacy of the Holy See; and she does not admit that Scripture with private interpretation is the ground of religion, the basis of true Christianity. Then the principle of union was not Scripture.

It is clear the principle was this—any one who holds not to the Catholic Church, to that Church which is spread over the whole world, which alone, has an episcopate, fulfils the conditions of universality—of Catholicity—any one who holds with that Church, is excluded; and the Established Church of England receives into communion any one who dissents from that.

Now let us, my brethren, proceed and analyse this.

It is well known that among the communities thus received into the arms, so widely extended, of the Church of England, there are some who reject altogether the Divinity of our Lord. There are multitudes of the members, and even of the pastors of the Church of Geneva who reject it—she permits this blasphemy to be taught in her public pulpits—that Church which burnt Servetus for denying the Divinity of Christ, now suffers the doctrine of Servetus to be preached publicly and habitually by her

ministers. Others are professedly rank Calvinists, and do not admit the same extent of the real presence, or of the sacramental action in the Church, which the Church of England does. Others, again, reject episcopacy and ordination, and the hierarchy on which the Church of England is based.

Then look what a broad basis comes in. What is the principle here? Oh, you may be against me or with me, provided you have a common enemy with me. You gather, when you deny the divinity of Christ; you gather, when you deny episcopacy, and disbelieve in priestly power; you gather, when you teach the people that the Lord is in no way present in the Eucharist; you gather, when you reject baptism. Oh yes; you gather with me, the Church of England, who hold all these doctrines as sacred. And why? Not because you are united with me, but because you hate another. All who are enemies of the Pope, all who oppose the spirit of Popery, are my friends, although denying even the divinity of Christ our Lord.

Good God! is this the principle of our Lord when He said—"He who is not with me is against me?" Was this the teaching which He wished the Church to teach till the end of time? Is this the broad basis of communion? Is this the Spirit of God? Is this Christ, our Lord, teaching among men? Which Church represents our Lord's principle, which represents His sense of truth, which represents our Lord in His dogmatic assertion of truth to the world?

My brethren, colour may be given to this circumstance in any way that you please; but look at it in principle, and acknowledge, as you must, that here the Church of England, through its constituted authorities, has treated as real pastors, as teachers in the Church of God, as being a portion of His Church, persons who deny doctrines which it considers essential; and when you have come to this,

you have arrived at the conclusion, that the Church of England is content to take as a principle of her universality, that of being antagonist to another portion of what she is obliged to call a part of the Church of Christ. No matter how low in dogmatic organization and life the churches or communities may have sunk, they are all welcome to her, provided they join her as allies in a common warfare! Is that the way that Christ spoke to the Pharisees or to the priests, or to any other who differed from that Church to which He then belonged, and still more who differed from that Church which He was going to establish?

Connected with this demonstration of religious liberality—connected I mean in time and circumstance rather than in character—there has been lately a further demonstration in reference to the efforts made by the Church of England to propagate the Gospel in foreign parts. And I could not help observing at a meeting which was held on this subject, what I had observed on many occasions before, and what has become a popular and fashionable mode of speaking concerning the Church of England. It was there repeated by several speakers, but by one in particular. And it was this. What the Church of England has done in foreign parts, particularly her recent establishment of bishoprics and colonial churches in particular, was alluded to, as being what they call ‘signs of life.’ “Who,” they asked, “will say that the Church is not giving signs of life when she is doing these things and putting forth such power at such a distance?” And one episcopal speaker went to the extent of finding signs of life in the very dissensions and divisions existing in the Church, which I will only characterize by saying, that an allusion to such signs of life should rather lead one immediately to infer the existence of disease; disease,

in fact, is a sign of life, but such a sign as few of us congratulate ourselves in exhibiting.

To us, my brethren, this anxiety, this eagerness to discover in the Church of England signs of life, appears sadly ominous of signs of death. If any man who felt himself in fair and tolerable health, were to overhear his friends whispering as they looked at him anxiously, while he was taking exercise, or vigorously performing some duty ;—if at this time he were to overhear some friends whisper, ‘ There are some signs of life in him ;’—surely, he would say, ‘ Do you perceive any thing wrong in me ? Either this is cruel, or you have been noticing in me signs of illness or death. It sounds to me as though you thought that I had been or was near dissolution.’

And in fact, my brethren, who thinks of signs of life when he walks, when he runs, when he eats his meals with an appetite, when he performs his duties well, when whatever he does, he does as he has always done ? At such a time he never dreams of seeking for signs of life. A man may look out for signs of life, when there is a failing of any power ; but it will never strike him, while in full health, even to think of proofs or signs of life. His whole existence, his very being, is full of the signs of life.

On the other hand, when is it that people begin to talk anxiously about the signs of life ? When you see a man suddenly struck down and prostrate ; the physician at his side with his hand on his pulse, and listening to his breathing and when the physician says, there are signs of life, then people watch the symptoms. When death is threatening ; when the body is consumed by long illness ; when the powers of nature are exhausted ;—then the skilful man of science comes in and weighs minutely, and carefully, each symptom of consciousness or organised being, and then he tells the friends around : “ The case is not hopeless ; there are signs of life, and with much care we may be able to restore the patient.” When there-

fore, in a body constituted as the Church of England ; when, in any Church, you find its Pastors,—those who should be its physicians—studying thus cautiously and minutely, and detailing with pomp and with great exultation, the discovery of signs of life, believe me that body is languishing, that body is perishing, that body is being dissolved ; and none know it so well as those who are eager to stumble on a sign of life. This is the case here, and I fear not to say so, because an authority has thus spoken which is much better than my own ; and I believe it still more, because the symptoms which they so eagerly seize on are not those of vigorous life, but of simple existence.

When they tell me that a Church three hundred years old—a Church with such resources, such wealth as no other Church ever had before—a Church possessing the extremes of earth through its connexion with the State—a Church that can send its missionaries under the broadsides and the pennant of the triumphant English crown—that can land them under the protection of cannon on the most inhospitable coast, and protect them while they scatter Bibles, and then return in safety—a Church which can establish her missionaries under the safeguard of fortresses and diplomatic agents—a Church which has colonies in every part of the world, where her ministers can live in ease and comfort—for this Church to tell me, that because it sends out a few Bishops to the colonies, that it has a sign of life ; because it discharges a duty which the Catholic Church has discharged for 1800 years, and which, if it had ever ceased to discharge, it would have thought long since that it was going to die ; for it is not a duty of vigorous life, but of necessity ;—a part of the constitution of the Church ; because, “ Go and teach all nations, and gather together all people, and instruct them,” was a necessary charge to the Church ; for a Church, I say, to congratulate itself on this as an extraordinary act, one which the rival Church of Rome has been doing all

along, and never boasted of it, surely it makes us fear that the symptoms of life are struggling with those of death. And when once this principle of combat is set in, oh, it is in the nature of every body mortal ;—and it is in the nature of every institution which is human, as well as of every being that is mortal ;—that death shall in the end prevail ; and the life which is engaged in the struggle is, of its nature, destined to be vanquished. Yes, from the symptoms which these wise physicians have been so carefully treasuring, they acknowledge that there is a combat between life and death ; and where the principle of death exist, there is the body of death, and death must have its prey.

I would close here, but there has been a sentiment expressed, on occasion of this celebration, so atrocious, so unchristian, so hateful to God, that I cannot pass it over. Within the solemn vaults, under the magnificent ceiling of that majestic Abbey whose towers may hence be seen ;—within listening distance of that tomb in which lies the greatest of English kings—the greatest because the most Catholic ;—in that choir, and near that spot where saints, and even martyrs, have stood and preached—and they, too, were Catholics—a Bishop of the Church which claims to teach the doctrines of liberality—mind, liberality, as well as charity to all of this nation—a Bishop of that Church has uttered a sentiment which I have characterised, without any intention to retract one syllable of what I said ;—a sentiment, I fear not to utter it ;—and remember that whenever I speak here, or whenever a Catholic speaks here, he believes, he knows, that he speaks in the presence of his God—in the presence of his Blessed Saviour here residing on our altar, and this day in particular, in His presence, when He has been brought forth from His inner sanctuary to be adored visibly by His people ;—remember that I speak with a consciousness of His presence ;—and yet I venture to

say that it was a sentence atrocious and hateful to the God of charity and peace. I will read you the sentence briefly, and will comment upon it.

It is from a sermon delivered in Westminster Abbey, on the 16th of this month, by the Bishop of London. The text was, that Christ "was the true light that came into the world." The words to which I refer are these: "The Church of Rome had departed from the example of our Lord, and by an unworthy condescension to the weakness of human nature on the one hand, and the rites of Paganism on the other, she had diluted and debased the truth of the gospel, and she had made a compromise with the powers of darkness for achieving a seeming, but an unsubstantial triumph."*

Perhaps you, my brethren, may be disposed, from what I have been saying, to think, on the contrary, that she has been but too stern in the application of the principle of the invariability of truth. But it is of the closing words that I solemnly complain: "And she has made a compromise with the powers of darkness, for achieving a seeming, but an unsubstantial triumph." My brethren, there are hateful charges in this world, if made against an individual; but I know not if it is possible to bring one more deeply bespeaking hatred and the darker passions, than to pronounce him guilty of having entered into a compromise, or a compact, with the powers of darkness, to obtain a seeming prosperity, which men see him enjoy. And if to an individual soul, a soul that Christ has redeemed, a soul that professes to make heaven its aim, this would be such a calumny, as that it would be considered that no justice of earth could compensate, but that the soul must appeal to the judgment of God;—what shall it be, when it is spoken of millions of us, of millions of us, here and over the whole world, who believe in this Church of Rome; who believe it not only to be part of the

* See the Sermon, in the *Morning Post*, Tuesday, June 17.

Church of God, but the only true Church of God on earth? To tell us that we have entered into a compromise with the powers of darkness, for the purpose of achieving a seeming but an unsubstantial triumph! And what is the triumph? My brethren, when a compromise is made, there are concessions on both sides; and the concessions will be according to the power of him who is to make them. There is one attempted compromise on record. When our Blessed Redeemer was taken to the top of a high mountain by the "Power of Darkness," He was shown the kingdoms of the earth, and it was said to Him, "All these will I give Thee, if, falling down, Thou wilt adore me." Then Lucifer did ask for a compromise. And what did he offer? The goods of this earth, the wealth of kingdoms. Did he offer spiritual triumphs? Did he offer success in preaching "one God in three Persons" to mankind? Did he offer abundance of charity, and the riches of good works? Did he promise sanctity and holiness to the thousands of our Lord's followers, whom he wished to bribe? No: he *could not give* these things, and no compromise with the powers of darkness will give them. They can give splendour, and riches, and influence—the greatness and riches of this world.

Go to those who have these things, who possess all that can make this world something of a compensation for heaven lost, and tell them that it looks as though a power, that rules over the whole empire, was their protector. But go not to the persecuted, to the trampled and ground down, to those who have been for ages the victims of persecution, and have been trodden under the feet of those shod with the gold of earth. Go not to those whose ancestors bled on the scaffold. Go not to those who are now scarcely raising up their heads after centuries of persecution, when the legislative arm, supported and strengthened by that spiritual power which calumniates them, beats them down again, humbled and

afflicted; go not to them, and tell them that they have compromised with the kings and the princes of this world, for things that are spiritual and that are unseen; and who, if their faith was not above temptation, would willingly fling it to those who thus presume to judge them!

And, beyond the limits of this kingdom is the Catholic Church in a state of triumph, such as to show that it is protected by him to whom God has given, for a time, the power of dispensing the greatness of this earth? Is the Catholic Church in its Centre, its Sovereign, its head, such as to be ought but an object of rebellion, of conspiracy, of persecution, and apparently of trial? Has the Church of France been as if it were under the protection of the powers of darkness, with its curates and priests struggling to lead the life of the poor, and its bishops fettered on every side by oppressions, and hardships, and legal enactments, and not able, though they do mighty things indeed, to restore any of the splendour of their ancient and magnificent Church? Is the Church in Spain; is the Church in Germany; is the Church elsewhere;—in a state showing a compromise with the powers of evil? Oh, my brethren, there were days, and those were the days of the gospel, and the times of the apostles themselves, when, if the comparison had had to be made, and the conclusion had to be drawn by the different state of Christians and of heathens, and if one was to be considered as representing our crucified Lord on Calvary, and the other, the haughty lord of the earth;—it would not have been in the prostrate Churches of the Catholic fold, that the proof of the latter would have been discovered; but splendour, and the enjoyment of temporal prosperity, would have been looked on as much more akin to evidence of such a compromise!

Then, what is the “triumph that has been achieved” by the Church? I will tell you, my brethren, and

I ask you yourselves to say if, in this triumph, there is evidence of a compromise with the powers of darkness.

There went forth, three hundred years ago, to India—there went forth, without scrip or staff; without once calling at his own splendid mansion; not backed by a society collecting enormous moneys for distribution—no, he went forth alone, and threw himself in the midst of savage tribes, and preached to them unaided. And he was without honours, without name, without rank; and thousands and millions were converted to the faith, and have preserved it to this day. His name was Xavier. He obtained a “triumph.” He won that “unsubstantial and seeming triumph” which established the cross of Christ in the midst of India, so that no missionary of Protestantism has ever been able to go and plant the cross that yet grows there. Was this an unsubstantial triumph? Oh, blessed Saint! I utter the words with horror. If this sentence has any meaning, it would mean that thou didst cast away all that the world offered; that thou gavest up station, and wentest forth alone, and devoted thyself to martyrdom in the midst of nations far away: oh, good God, thou wast successful, because thou hadst compromised with the powers of darkness, and they allowed thee to preach Christ, and in return gave thee poverty! And so have Catholic missionaries gone to China and Japan, and they have compromised with the powers of darkness for a “seeming triumph!” And for what was it? For the gibbet, for the knife, for the most cruel and most painful deaths! Is it thus that Satan compromises his claims? Does he agree that man shall preach Christ, provided they shall suffer martyrdom? And after all, is it to be said that the Church whose triumph is this, has made a compromise with the powers of darkness—a Church whose principle is this, never to have swerved for an instant from the doctrine of God in

Unity and Trinity; never to have swerved in the smallest tittle from the doctrine of the Incarnation in full purity and intent—a Church whose triumph it is to have led men to heights of virtue and sanctity which the greatest enemies of the Church dare not deny? Did not Satan ask that these should be compromised on entering into compact with him? Did he permit that all these should be taught in that Church which is guided by God Himself—a Church which floats like a majestic vessel on the bosom of this earth? Did he permit that this Church should be allowed to sacrifice purity of belief in these doctrines? Did he permit its own Bishops, within its pale, to deny the Divinity of their Lord? Oh, my brethren, here there was no compromise!

Strangely reversed in views and ideas and in his dealings with man is that Power of Darkness, when that Church which is within its grasp, which has entered into compromise with it, is allowed to maintain unflinchingly, as a condition of its teaching, the purity of God's doctrines, and to boast more than any thing of truth as opposed to darkness! Oh, I could say much more, much more, indeed does that sentence call forth of severe commentary; but I will conclude. When the king of Babylon sent Ezekiel a letter full of threats, and reproaches, and blasphemies, the prophet went into the sanctuary of God, and laid it before Him, saying, "look at the things they have written, and render justice." I say this, too. Look, O God, how Thy Spouse is spoken of here by those who call themselves sharers in Thy inheritance! See how they who profess to be Thy true christian children, who consider themselves as bearers of the message of Thy truth to the extent of the earth—they, who at the same time, dare not deny to their own Church its title, for they claim, at least, to be partakers of that title, but who consider her as a branch only—see how they speak of her, and how they vilipend her, and how ungenerously and uncharitably they traduce her

before Thy people! O God, I ask not for Thy revenge! Forbid that such a thought should ever cross the heart of a Catholic bishop. I ask not that Thou shouldst move Thy power in our behalf. I ask not Thee to take our cause into Thy hands. I know that Thou wilt do so, for it is Thine, O God! Thy spouse is Thine, and her honour is dearer to Thee than to us. No; send down more brightly than ever the rays of Thy truth:—drop, more tenderly, the sweetness of thy charity on the hearts of men:—soften them to the common generosity of justice:—smooth them to the expression of words of common honesty;—and then grant that Thy truth prevail, in spite of error, and prejudice, and influence! Oh, may there be no longer any against Thee any, who scatter;—but may all be with Thee, on Thy side, here on earth, and at the last day, in Thy glorious presence, in Thine eternal kingdom!

